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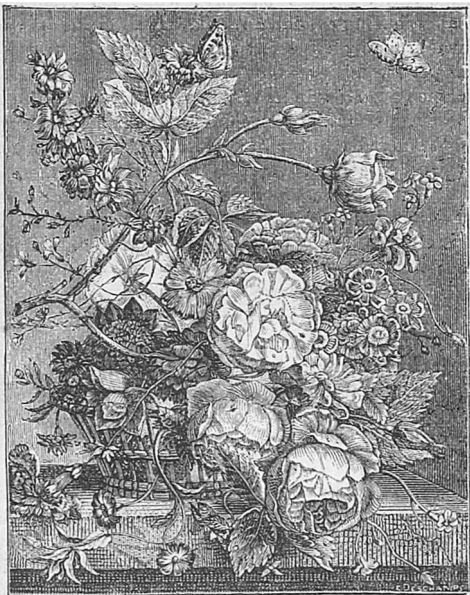
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JOHN VAN HUYSUM.



THERE is an essential difference between the genius of a Huysum and that of a Cuypp or a Douw; the latter reach to
VOL. III.—No. XIV.

the verge of the very highest branch of art, but our present artist is of another school, though sufficiently great in his way. Some have instituted a comparison between Baptiste Huet and Huysum. But these two artists are separated by the wide difference that exists between the French and the Flemish schools. It is from the similitude and yet the contrast between them that we can appreciate the distinction between the two schools, and can seize and judge of the difference between the style in which they have severally treated flowers. The French school is generally considered to regard nature as something purely secondary, much inferior to man, and bowing wholly subservient to his greatness. For a long time that school used landscape but as the framework of an historic scene, or as a garden, where wandered poets, and heroes, and philosophers. They rarely took for subjects the lovely creations of the earth. Flowers, above all, were disregarded by them. Even those who did make them their special study and their choice workmanship, used them only as light decorations fit to adorn the panels of the palace and boudoir of the lady of fashion. The artists of the French school used flowers simply to show off their delicacy of touch, their richness of colouring, and the keenness of their eye. The painters of the Flemish and Dutch schools always placed nature in the first rank both in their admiration and in their pictures. As long as they confined themselves to natural sources, to inspiration, arising from their own characters and climate, everything was a subject for a masterpiece. They were quite satisfied when

they could paint the banks of a river, when they could make a picturesque scene out of an old moss-grown wall, or render the grace and elegance of a flower, its peculiar and gentle charms, its every tint, characteristic, and hue. The same country which produced so many amateurs of flowers, so many enthusiastic worshippers of the tulip, gave to the world also the best artists in this peculiar line. The son of Gaul devoted a leisure hour to a bouquet, to show his power of rendering contrasts, and to bring together all the bright colours which are found in this sun-born department of creation. The Dutchman seeks to rouse sympathy and admiration in the heart of the amateur of gardens, to awaken in his soul the emotions naturally suggested and kindled in the mind of one who loves flowers, who knows their history, their family, their varieties, and their perfume. He seeks to make the rose of an hour live a hundred years. Huet paints a bunch of flowers merely for effect and contrast. John Van Huysum painted flowers from love, and under the influence of a kind of inspiration.

The place where he was born was peculiarly the locality where flowers were always highly appreciated. No other nation at that time could enter into the floricultural enthusiasm of the Dutchmen. Huysum was born at Amsterdam, in 1682. He was the pupil and the eldest son of Justus Van Huysum, a flower-painter, who had transformed his house into a kind of manufactory of everything which could contribute to the decoration of apartments and gardens. At the head of this peculiar establishment Justus Van Huysum placed his son John, while all his other sons, whom he had also initiated into the mysteries of the art of painting, worked under him. The coarse work of this trade soon disgusted John, who felt within himself higher and nobler aspirations towards true art. He accordingly entered deeply into the study of Abraham Mignon, an able painter, of Verelst, and David de Heem, who was a kind of master in this school. His flowers and fruit were executed with the utmost neatness and finish, while his colours were brilliant, and harmonised in the purest manner. From the study of these masters, John Van Huysum turned to the ever-open page of nature, where, despite the clear and transparent light shed on all creation's works, so few learn to read. This imitation of their line of conduct was most fortunate for our artist, as it enabled him to see all that was good in his predecessors who were considered inimitable, and to correct, by reference to reality, any errors into which they fell. He found errors in their copies of nature, slight and trifling faults, indeed, but such as he endeavoured to avoid. It was, then, by active and industrious search after the real and the beautiful, that the genius of Huysum was cultivated to the highest pitch. Beginning only with flowers, he saw open before him a whole world—fresh, new, delightful. He investigated every branch of his subject; he visited every corner of his new domains. Birds, butterflies, wasps, bees, all came in for their share. He made them all, as it were, the satellites of floricultural creation. At an early period, he studied diligently to imitate the marble slabs which were to support his baskets of flowers, the pots which were to contain his bouquets, the bas-reliefs which were to adorn his vases, and all the delicate minutiae of ornaments for handles, etc. He armed himself from head to foot to conquer the domain of roses. He was a regular Don Quixote of horticulture.

This taste for flowers seems to have been innate. Even when an infant, it was remarked that his eye was constantly attracted by the bright colours of nature's most beautiful and most short-lived children; and, during his boyhood, his great delight was the cultivation of a little plot of garden-ground, where he would pass hours sitting upon a bench, watching, in spring and summer time, the result of his labours and his care. This taste of his was so well known, that his father's friends never thought of giving him any other presents than a packet of seeds or a bunch of roots, and it was the general opinion that he would ultimately become a great botanist—perhaps a great physician. Those who thought so, however, did not know that the young Van Huysum cared little to study the secret processes of nature, and was captivated only by the

graceful forms, the exquisite colours, and the beautiful grouping of his flowers. Vanderkamp relates, in his collection of anecdotes of the notabilities of Amsterdam, that when our painter was a mere youth, a curious adventure happened to him from this excessive fondness for the floral productions of nature. He was one day wandering in the neighbourhood of the city, when he came to a garden separated from the road by one of those neat hedges which form the admiration of all travellers in Holland. According to his usual custom, he looked over to see if there was anything in his way worth admiring, and having discovered that all the flowers in the beds were already well known to him, was about to go away, when his eye was attracted by a magnificent tulip that stood in a pot upon one of the lower balconies of the house. Its size, its form, its lustre, at once threw him into ecstasies of delight, and he would have given anything to have been allowed to approach it, to hang over it, to contemplate it from various points of view.

Timidity, natural to his age, prevented him, however, from entering the garden and asking permission to gratify his desire; and so, after having lingered near the hedge for more than an hour, he tore himself away with a sigh and returned homewards.

But the tulip still occupied his thoughts. He neither supped nor slept that night, and next morning early went forth and returned to the garden, in hopes of again seeing his beautiful flower. The windows of the house, however, were still closed, and the tulip had not yet been put out into the air. Van Huysum was patient. He walked up and down meditating, until at length he saw a young girl come out with the tulip pot in her hand and place it carefully where it could catch the first rays of the sun. Anybody else would have observed that the young girl was beautiful exceedingly; but the young painter only looked upon her as a thing that carried a flower, or rather he did not look upon her at all, but gazed with his great eyes at the real object of his admiration.

It happened that Agatha Kostar—such was the young girl's name—was betrothed to the son of one of the richest burgo-masters of Amsterdam, who came out that morning on a visit to his intended father-in-law, partly to discuss the preliminaries of his marriage, and partly to settle the price of two hundred and fifty hogsheads of sugar, which Van Kostar had for sale. As he walked deliberately by, examining as he went the nice little garden and the neat house which were to form part of Agatha's dowry, he could not help being struck at seeing rather a wild-looking youth staring like a tiger over the hedge full upon the balcony; while his betrothed still stood, after having set down the flower, admiring it, and now and then brushing off a few grains of dust that had fallen upon its petals.

Dutchmen are slow in most things. The son of the burgo-master took this fact into his mind, without making any comment, and walked into the house. But when he came to the window, and perceived that Agatha still lingered there, under the raking fire of as eager a pair of eyes as he had ever seen, he could not help feeling a small, a very small pang or jealousy; and touching the young lady on the shoulder, said to her,

"Who is that young man?"

The young girl looked very innocently, first at him, and then at the stranger, and replied:

"I had not seen him; he is some beggar probably. I will send him out something."

"Some broken victuals," economically observed the burgo-master's son, in whom the feeling of jealousy began slowly to die away.

Next morning, however, again perceiving Van Huysum at his post, he took note of his costume, and convinced himself that he was no beggar. Now, as he perfectly well knew that a plate of broken victuals had been sent out, and did not know that Van Huysum had gone away in the meantime, all this business appeared very strange to him, and he determined, as he stepped slowly towards the house, to come to an explanation.

He found Van Kostar sitting enjoying his pipe at one of the back windows, in a state of contemplative beatitude, with a large ledger open before him; for the good old gentleman had long been confined to his house by obesity and the gout, and was compelled to transact all his business there.

"Good morning, my son," said he, stretching out his fat hand.

The young man took it, gave it a solemn shake, sat down, and came at once to the point.

"I am not satisfied with Agatha," said he. Then, leaving this observation to sink into the old gentleman's mind, he took up a pipe, filled it, and began to smoke in a very jealous and melancholy way.

Van Kostar looked at him, and took more time in trying to get at the meaning of his phrase than he did generally in deciding on the merits of a commercial operation. At length he said what he might have said before, "I don't understand what you say."

The burgomaster's son then stated that he had seen a young man making love to Agatha over the hedge, which, for a Dutchman, was rather a stretch of imagination. Van Kostar opened his eyes, laid down his pipe, and struck a blow with his fat hand upon the table.

"Son-in-law," said he, "what you say is not true. I know Agatha, and shall call her at once to have an explanation."

Now it happened that Agatha, as even the discreetest young ladies will sometimes do, had been listening at the door, and heard the charge which had been made against her. Instead of coming in at once, and exculpating herself, she instantly ran back to the balcony, moved by a natural female curiosity to have a look at this young stranger, of whom she had hitherto taken no notice.

Van Huysum was still there, and was employed in trying to sketch on a piece of card the object of his fond admiration. "It is true," thought Agatha, blushing, "and he is writing a letter to me. Upon my faith, he is a very handsome young man; and Gerard never looked at me in that way."

Whilst she was indulging in this dangerous speculation, Gerard, the burgomaster's son, made his appearance, and conveyed to her her father's message, that he desired to see her, but without alluding to the suspicions which he had himself entertained.

On seeing his kind, grave face, Agatha repented a little of having allowed her thoughts to wander, but still could not help carrying on the mortification a little further. She was quite convinced that Gerard was right, so far as Van Huysum was concerned, and equally convinced of her own innocence.

There is nothing that makes women so revengeful as being wrongfully suspected; and Agatha is therefore deserving of credit that she did not determine to flirt with the stranger as soon as she found out who he was. "I am afraid," she said, "that I know what my father wants."

Gerard started, for as yet there had been no fact to confirm or justify his uneasiness. He looked sorrowfully at the young girl, and taking her hand, led her to the chamber where her father was waiting rather impatiently for her presence. The old man exclaimed at once, "Well, daughter, has Gerard told you what is the matter?"

"No, father," she replied; "but I think he is jealous."

"That's it," exclaimed the old man, laughing; "but you must tell him at once that he is mistaken, and that the young fellow with the eyes thinks no more of you than he does of my tulips."

"I am not quite sure of that, father," replied Agatha.

Van Kostar gave a long whistle, and then meditated for a few moments. At length he said, "Would it not be well, Gerard, instead of talking to this foolish girl, to learn who this stranger may be? Go out, like a man, and tell him to come in. I have always found, that to be straightforward is the best way to do business."

Gerard immediately walked out and went to Van Huysum, who had just finished his sketch, and said to him, "Young man, will you come with me? I know not who you are, but I am afraid that you are nearer to obtaining what you desire than I am."

"Thank heaven!" exclaimed Van Huysum with the accent of a passionate lover.

Gerard felt his heart sink within him, and said, "Have you loved long?"

"Three days," exclaimed Van Huysum.

"And I have loved her for three years," said Gerard, with a sigh.

"Three years!" cried the young painter. "Has that flower been in bloom so long?"

Gerard thought to himself, this is the fine talk with which these young popinjays win the hearts of maidens. If she be inclined to him after having only seen his head over a hedge, what will it be when he makes fine speeches to her? Then he said aloud, "She is eighteen years old."

"Eighteen years!" again exclaimed Van Huysum, in a dreamily poetical manner. And so he followed his rival into the house, and was soon in presence of the old man and his daughter.

Gerard by this time had made up his mind that the young stranger loved Agatha, and that Agatha loved the young stranger; and being both a prudent and a good man, said to his intended father-in-law, "It is useless to struggle against fate. I know that they are destined for one another; and if this young man makes his demand, and it be accepted, I shall withdraw my claims, and the relations of our houses shall not be disturbed."

Agatha looked rather surprised at being so easily abandoned, and having compared the appearance of Van Huysum with that of Gerard, saw that, after all, the latter was much the most eligible individual. Besides, she had not really thought of breaking off a good match in this romantic way, and now exclaimed, "I suppose my consent will be asked?"

Van Huysum approached her, and taking her hand said, "I beseech you not to disappoint me."

By this time Van Kostar had a little recovered from the surprise which their strange doings had excited, and roared out:—"Is everybody mad? What is the meaning of all this nonsense? Do you think I will give Agatha to the first stranger that is picked up by the way-side?"

Van Huysum thought that the tulip had received a name. And looking very respectfully at the irate old gentleman, said, "If you will not part with Agatha herself, as you have been so kind as to call me in, will you give me one of her bulbs?"

At this extraordinary speech it seemed evident that the young painter was insane, and Gerard began to think whether it would be most proper to knock him down or coax him away. Our painter, however, not understanding the odd looks that were cast at him, went on to say: "I saw your tulip the day before yesterday, and so admired its perfection, that I wished to possess a similar one, or at any rate to be allowed to make a sketch of it. I have tried to do so over the hedge, but am afraid that I have not succeeded." He then drew forth his card, and exhibited his performance. Agatha bit her lips, for she began to feel rather ridiculous; but her father and her lover laughed heartily, and the former exclaimed, "Young man, you may have my tulip, pot and all, and if you will paint it for me, I will buy the picture, and make a present of it to my daughter at the christening of her first child."

Agatha, says the worthy Vanderkamp, who seems to have hung over this story with fondness, ran away blushing, and Van Huysum afterwards found in Van Kostar one of his most liberal patrons.

The Dutch are very extreme in their love of collections. They describe this peculiar taste by the word *lief-hebbery*, which may be translated, curiosity-love. Some collect shells, some indulge in the luxury of medals; and in many a grocer's and cheesemonger's house will you find a library of strange and rare books of Elzevirs and primitive editions; or you will find the same man making unheard-of sacrifices for antique Chinese and Japanese ware. But the greatest instance of the *lief-hebbery* known, is this devotion of the Dutch to the art of flower-painting. They worship this branch of art; it is a subject of adoration. It will then be readily understood to what a degree John Van Huysum received encouragement,

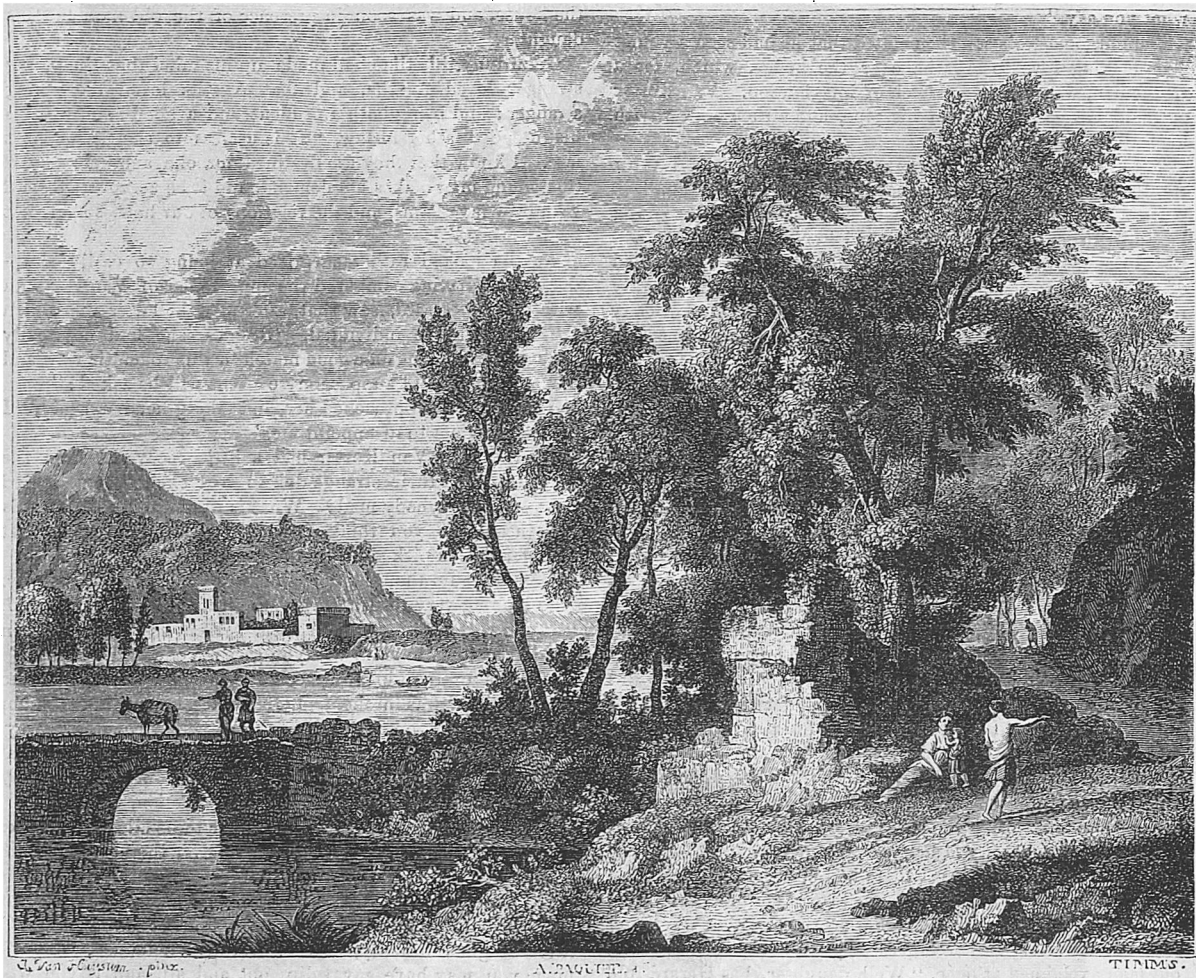
when we mention that he succeeded in eclipsing Abraham Mignon. In the same picture he flattered both their love for painting and for flowers. It may, however, be remarked, that one of the first persons, after Van Kostar, to purchase his works and to cry up his talents was the envoy of France, the Count of Morville, who ordered four pictures, two for the Duke of Orleans, and two for himself.

The generous protection of this friend soon made Van Huysum fashionable. It drew attention to him, particularly from foreigners of rank and wealth; and from that moment, we are informed by Deschamps, his pictures fetched as much as 1,200 Dutch florins (about £120). His reputation having spread far and near, several German princes and all the sovereigns in Europe were eager to possess flowers from the hand of

bouquets of Van Huysum, and informs us that the brother of the painter, James Van Huysum, "lived with Lord Orford, and painted most of the pictures in the attic story."

Though fashion does sometimes decide the temporary fate of an artist, yet when that reputation continues to hold its own, it can scarcely be deceptive. The unanimous suffrages of artistic Europe were never yet given to mediocrity. At all events, they were not in the case of John Van Huysum. He really did reach, in flower-painting, almost to perfection, and we may almost say of him what d'Argenville says of Baptiste, "his flowers only want perfume to make them real."

The arrangement, the drawing, the perspective, the *chiaro-oscuro*, the touch, were all studied by Van Huysum with ardour. He seemed to catch by intuition at the varied



THE LITTLE BRIDGE.—FROM A PAINTING BY VAN HUYSUM.

a painter, whose workshop was the gardens of the richest floriculturists of Amsterdam and Haarlem; the King of Poland, the King of Prussia, the Elector of Saxony, the Prince of Hesse, ordered pictures of him, for which they paid him very large sums; and one, who, to use a French hyperbolic phrase, "was almost a sovereign," Sir Robert Walpole, obtained from him four pictures to adorn his mansion at Houghton-hall, in Norfolk. Huysum from that hour was a favourite in England. His charming productions were appreciated at once, at a time when it was fashionable to follow the example of a noble lord, and when the good opinion of such a man as Walpole did more for an artist than even his genius. The pictures purchased by Sir Robert Walpole, says Horace Walpole, in the account he gives of his father's pictures in 1752, were most highly finished. In this work, he only mentions two

elements of his glory. He may have been less skilful, he may have been less of a painter than Huet in the more artistic co-ordination of a bouquet. The French academician looked principally to the effect of the whole, and regarding flowers only as ornaments, made all the little sacrifices necessary to give relief, unity, and animation to his picture. Van Huysum often mars by certain little details the general whole. To render it more light, he cuts his picture up by small, fine, and capricious branches. The elegant lightness of all this ravishes the heart of the botanist, who recognises and names with joy the myosotis, the fuschia, and the blue campanula; but these delicate accessories sometimes injure the frankness of the general effect. There was a want of completeness which drew down the blame of other artists, and laid him open to criticism; men who see in a sprig of lily of the valley nothing

but a bunch of little bright points, and for whom an anemony is rather a tone than a flower, objected to the artistic carefulness of some of his productions.

Without falling into the insipidity which is the necessary result of an attempt to attain visible symmetry, the painter must give to his basket of flowers an order which, however, he must take care to hide. The young girl who has returned from the garden with her great straw hat full of flowers, has made haste to immerse their stalks into a vessel full of water,

other hand, be symmetrically divided, and present to the eye a too methodical arrangement. A tuft of anemones may counter-balance a hyacinth; the rose of Provins may be the companion of a double full-grown poppy; because the brilliancy of a tone increases the size of a flower, and exalts its importance: a daisy is larger in appearance than a violet of the same size. These ideas are suggested by the painting we have engraved (p. 136); for it is Van Huysum who speaks, and we are only translating, in an imperfect manner, what the admirable picture



GROUP OF FLOWERS.—FROM A PAINTING BY VAN HUYSUM.

and with her simple hand, without thought and without design, she has given to her bouquet a charming aspect, an inexpressible and unexpected beauty. So must the artist do. What an ingenuous child, in whom grace is natural, discovers by instinct, the painter must attain by a scenic combination. In what that combination consists, it were difficult to say. We may affirm, nevertheless, that the corresponding parts must be unequal, and that if the bouquet does not look well when leaning entirely to one side of the vase, it must not, on the

eloquently teaches. It is the master himself who tells us to what degree perspective and design are necessary to the flower-painter, and that there is nothing so difficult to draw, for example, as a leaf foreshortened, or a flower with the petals curled inwards. It is he who shows us what art, what care, is necessary for setting these pretty models, so that, whether seen in full or in profile, bending forwards or backwards, they may always preserve the character and the form which we know to be peculiar to them. Inartistically repre-

sented, a round flower may appear square or triangular; and seen from a particular point of view, a chesnut-flower, which takes a pyramidal form in nature, may seem to be round.

One of the ablest writers upon painting, Sir Joshua Reynolds, has said, speaking of Rubens, that his paintings were *nosegays of colours*. This phrase darts like a ray of light through this difficult subject of flower-painting. It is evident that nature supplies those who follow this art with the proper tone of every one of the elements—we were going to say, of the personages—of their picture. The painter, therefore, has only to compose his *chiaro-oscuro* with the local colours, and without having to invent the harmony of his work, he finds it ready made. As Philip Wouvermans makes use of the variegated coats of his horses—the bay, the chesnut, the dappled gray, the black, and the white—to develop the gamut of his *chiaro-oscuro*, so Van Huysum, taking his flowers, in one sense, as so many tones and demi-tones already formed on the palette of nature, has only to dispose them to produce the nosegay of which Reynolds speaks; and may thus, by softening away towards his background, by means of flowers in demi-tint and of deep-coloured models, like the iris, the bluebell, and the pansy (grouping his light flowers towards the centre), discover, we will not say only optical perspective, but even a poetical aspect, from the fidelity of the imitation.

"The artist who wishes to attain a certain amount of talent in this department of art," says Millin, "should pass the greater part of his life in studying his models. He ought to possess a garden in which to cultivate them himself, in order that he may be able to procure the most beautiful of each season of the year, to make a choice of them, and to have nature under his eyes as he works. To be successful in painting flowers, certain natural dispositions are necessary, which every artist does not possess. There are, indeed, certain moral qualities which seem to favour the artist in this department who has possessed them. To the exact *coup d'œil* which makes them correct draughtsmen and good colourists—to the indefatigable patience in matters of detail—to the cleanliness of handiwork which leads to perfection—these artists commonly unite a gentleness of character, a serenity of soul, and an evenness of temper, which tend to make them at all times equally correct, equally pure in colour, equally certain and like in their 'handling.'"

Who would not believe that this portrait of the flower-painter is precisely that of Van Huysum? Who would suppose that the author of these sweet masterpieces—the assiduous companion of hyacinths, of tulips, and of roses—had lived an agitated and sombre life? It is, nevertheless, true, that in the midst of his triumphs Van Huysum suffered the pangs of jealousy. He had married a woman who, according to some biographers, was neither young, nor pretty, nor desirable; but it happened one day that the railleries of one of those men who feel a stupid pleasure in disturbing the happiness of others introduced grief into his soul. From time to time indeed his mind wandered. Once, in a moment of irritation, he insulted the master of the house in which he lived, and was turned into the streets. To these excesses succeeded a long fit of melancholy. As an increase of misfortune, the son of this suspected wife fell into evil ways, so that Van Huysum, seeing him to be incorrigible, was obliged to ship him off to India. It happened, however, as a rare exception, that his painting was by no means influenced by these miseries of his domestic life. His temper was sad and sombre. His paintings were always smiling and transparent. When he was at work no one was admitted into his studio, not even his brothers; as if he had desired, says his biographer, Deschamps, following Van Gool, to hide from all his method of purifying his colours, and making use of them. But, perhaps, we should believe that solitude was necessary to his disturbed spirit,—that Van Huysum, to paint his flowers, required tranquillity and silence, as Gerard Douw to paint his quiet interiors, did his readings of the Bible. His exquisite finish supposes, in fact, an attention which nothing had disturbed, an enthusiasm which no external accident had cooled. We must, therefore, attribute

to something else besides vulgar quackery, or the littleness of egotism, the habit which the painter had of hiding himself from everybody when he was in presence of his flowers.

Vanderkamp, in the collection above quoted, has preserved some particulars of the domestic life of Van Huysum which are worth recording. He differs, however, from other writers in stating that, although Catherine, the painter's wife, was ten years older than himself when he married her, he was led to the match rather by affection than by interest. He became acquainted with her one morning at the market, when he was purchasing some rare and curious flower-roots, while she had come out to get provisions for her father's family, which was by no means well off. He liked her appearance so much that he broke off a bargain, which he had nearly concluded, to follow her home. They talked together, and he almost immediately expressed a wish to marry her. She told him that she was free, but that for the present neither her father nor her mother could do without her assistance. "The matter may be arranged, however," said Van Huysum, who calculated very sagaciously that a housewife would be rather a decrease than an increase to the expense of his establishment.

"Catherine," says Vanderkamp, who was a contemporary and had, probably, often seen the lady herself, "though not remarkably beautiful, was an agreeable-looking, neat-handed person, and it was easy to understand the affection which a quiet man like Van Huysum experienced for her."

They were married in due time, and during the early part of their union lived happily together. Catherine seems really to have been a virtuous person, though somewhat light-minded, and given to other society than that of her family. Having been somewhat neglected in her youth, she listened with pleasure to the compliments paid her by the fine people who came to look at her husband's pictures, and as he often left her for days and even weeks, to shut himself up in his room, or wander through the country to study the beauties of nature, her ardent affection for him somewhat diminished. The very fact that many young men paid court to her proves that the common opinion of her want of fascinating qualities is erroneous. Among her admirers was a Frenchman of the name of Gervais, who used to express his passion by sending every day a large bouquet of flowers.

Catherine perfectly understood what was meant by this attention, and yet rewarded the sender by nothing more than a few gracious smiles, when he paraded up and down in the street before the house, smiling with that self-satisfied air which is peculiar to French *roués*. She was so far, indeed, from understanding the danger of what was going on, that instead of throwing away the flowers, she made a practice of giving them to her husband, saying, or leaving him to understand, that they were sent to him by his friends.

Generally speaking, he observed, simply, that the arrangement of the flowers was too formal. At other times he pulled the bouquet to pieces, and tried, by casting it loose into a vase, to give it a natural arrangement. This went on for some time, and at length M. Gervais, finding that his presents were always received, began to think himself entitled to an interview. He accordingly wrote to the painter's wife, and told her to meet him by the canal about sunset. To his first letter Catherine paid no attention; but as she had contracted habits of idleness, and often sat for many hours musing on the pleasures which the wives of less intellectual persons than her husband could freely indulge in, ill-luck would have it that the idea came to her, that if M. Gervais wrote again she ought to comply with his invitation, in order to tell him how very improper it was for him to pursue her in this way, and that she was determined to remain faithful to her excellent husband. The second letter came, of course full of protestations and entreaties; and Catherine, whose prudence seems to have been quite asleep, took the opportunity, whilst her husband was still shut up in his studio, to dress herself out in her best, in order to go and reprove the enterprising Monsieur Gervais.

Had the man been less certain of his powers of fascination,

he might probably have succeeded in leading her astray; but the boldness of his manners frightened her at the outset, and she understood of what an unpardonable imprudence she had been guilty. Gervais even proposed that she should run away with him, but instead of that she ran away from him, and returning to her house shed bitter tears of repentance. Her husband, seeing her in this melancholy mood, sought to comfort her, and asked the reason of her grief; but she would not explain further than to say that she was a very bad woman, undeserving of his love. He laughed at this, and thought she had probably upset one of the valuable pots of varnish which had recently been sent to him as a present from Paris, and like a prudent man thought it best to say no more of the matter. His gentleness only made his wife more sorrowful, and indeed there was reason for her sorrow, though she did not know it, for from that time forth unhappiness and discord were introduced into the house.

Monsieur Gervais, furious at having been made a fool of, as he thought, determined to revenge himself, and meditated for some time how to carry his project into effect. He began by writing a third letter to poor Catherine, expressing his sorrow for his previous conduct, calling himself all the villains in the world, and begging her to grant him that forgiveness without which he said his life would be miserable. The good woman was delighted on receiving this communication, and consented easily to a request which it contained—that Gervais should be allowed to continue his presents of flowers as if nothing had happened. Every morning, accordingly, a magnificent bouquet was brought to the door, and Van Huysum used to say, smiling, "I see that our friends, whom I had thought had forgotten us, begin to remember us again." Whereupon Catherine, in her innocent joy, would take the flowers and place them in various lights, that he might admire them. Some time afterwards, Gervais met Van Huysum out in the fields, and coming to him said, in a very mysterious manner, "I hope you are happy."

"I hope so, too," replied Van Huysum, smiling, and stooping down to gather a remarkably fine blue-bell that grew at his feet. The French Iago laughed in a curious way, until he succeeded in attracting the painter's attention.

"What do you mean?" said the latter, rising up and looking inquisitively at him.

"I mean," replied Gervais, "that if that be the case, all the foolish stories that the people tell about your wife Catherine must be mere malicious inventions."

"And what do people say about my wife Catherine?" cried Van Huysum, beginning now to feel uneasy, and remembering the unexplained tears of his wife some short time before.

"Nothing particular," said Gervais.

"Nothing! People don't allude to 'nothing' in that extraordinary tone," exclaimed the painter.

"Why," said Gervais, "if I thought that the reports abroad were true, I would not repeat them to you; but as they are evidently mere calumnies, you ought to know them. They say that your wife is in correspondence with one of the Spaniards recently arrived in the suite of the Duke of Alva; and the most amusing part of the matter is, that he pretends to be a Frenchman, and has even assumed my name. I know that every morning he sends a nosegay of flowers to your house; but perhaps this may be by your permission; although some add that letters are concealed among the flowers."

On hearing these words, Van Huysum turned very pale, for he remembered that he had never thought of asking who it was that sent the presents of flowers, which he had received as intended for himself. He broke away from Gervais, and hastening home, shut himself up in his studio, and began to paint that celebrated picture of the deadly nightshade, which is the only one remaining of his that possesses a sombre character. We say remaining, because it was last heard of in the Louvre gallery in 1815, when it was claimed as stolen property by one of the petty princes of Germany. It is not mentioned, however, in any of the catalogues we have seen, and may have been destroyed, or, which is more probable, forms the ornament of some private cabinet. This, at least, is the

account which is current in Paris. Probably M. Jeanron, the late able director of the Louvre gallery, and one of the most learned men in the history of painting in the present age, might be able to furnish some further particulars. He has paid great attention to the annals of Dutch painting; and no man would be more capable, if he felt disposed, of giving us an account of all that vast number of little-known painters who illustrated the period in which Van Huysum lived.

To return, however, to Vanderkamp's narrative of the domestic tribulations of our flower-painter. On the morning that succeeded his interview with Gervais, he watched carefully the arrival of the accustomed nosegay, and instead of allowing his wife to take it in her hands, seized it himself, and hurriedly saying that it contained a flower which he wished to copy, ran to his studio, and shutting himself in, tore it to pieces. Sure enough, there was a small piece of folded paper concealed amongst the stalks, containing these words, "Thank you, dearest, thank you; you shall hear again to-morrow."

This missive, signed "G.," naturally confirmed the dreadful suspicion which had agitated Van Huysum's mind. Instead, however, of going to his wife, and asking for an explanation, the unfortunate man determined to indulge his grief in silence; to create no scandal, and simply to watch the proceedings of Catherine with greater care.

This incident was the beginning of a long series of domestic unhappiness. Van Huysum was not able sometimes to restrain himself from making bitter allusions to Catherine's misconduct, and she, feeling that his accusations were in the main unjust, and forgetting what cause she had given to his upbraidings by a moment of imprudence, often answered with asperity, and terrible quarrels were the result. Van Huysum, by degrees, seemed to lose all self-guidance, except when his art was concerned. Among other things, he imagined that the son who bore his name was not really his, and the rough treatment which this suspicion naturally caused may have partly contributed to drive the youth into bad company. At any rate, the whole town began soon to talk of his excesses, and it became necessary, in fact, to send him away. Gerard, the husband of Agatha, of whom we have already spoken, put him under the care of the supercargo of one of his ships. He went to India, as above stated, and seems, as he grew older, to have seen the error of his ways. At any rate, we find him about fifteen years afterwards established as a merchant at Batavia, where the name is still preserved in that of the firm of Dewink, Van Huysum, and Co. We do not know whether Van Huysum ever came to a proper explanation with his wife. The story of his quarrel with the master of the house in which he lived, according to Vanderkamp, was connected with a much more unfounded fit of jealousy than that suggested by the malice of Gervais. It appears that the landlord used sometimes to remonstrate with the painter on the violence of his language and conduct, and to praise the general good behaviour and the decent demeanour of Catherine, who, at that time, might almost be called an elderly woman. Van Huysum imagined that there must be some improper reason for this interference, and once forgot himself so far as to strike the landlord in answer to some more than usually vehement remonstrance. This led to a terrible quarrel, at the end of which Van Huysum was driven from the house. It would seem, however, that he was not ultimately compelled to change his abode. Probably an explanation ensued; and there seems some slight reason to believe that in this explanation Catherine's conduct was in some measure cleared up, for the painter still continued to live with her, which it is not likely he would have done if she had been anything more than the innocent cause of the sufferings he temporarily underwent.

However, his melancholy mood of mind still clung to him, and in the advanced years of his life he became more and more fond of retirement, more and more exclusively attached to his beloved flowers. Even when not occupied in painting them, he would sit for hours contemplating their beauties, and communing with them as if they were beings endowed with life. In the mad fits which occasionally came upon him,

he would talk to his tulips and his anemones as if he believed that they were capable of understanding him and appreciating his feelings. Some pretended that this strange behaviour

been a simple-minded man, rendered unhappy both by temperament and circumstances.

It has been asserted that Van Huysum was accessible to



FLOWERS AND FRUIT.—FROM A PAINTING BY VAN HUYSUM.

was affected merely in order to attract attention; but Vanderkamp, who knew him at this period of life, denies that affectation was any part of his character, and represents him to have

envy, a much more cruel and less easily avowed sentiment than jealousy; for envy is but a variety of hate, while jealousy is another form of love. The only pupil who was

ever brought up by Van Huysum—we speak on the authority of Van Gool—was a lady of the name of Havermann, who almost rivalled her master. The Dutch historian informs

received. He adds, that Van Huysum rejoiced at a circumstance that deprived him of a dangerous competitor. We may, however, very readily be led to infer, to the honour of



ROSES, AURICULAS, ANEMONES, POPPIES, AND AFRICAN MARIGOLD.—FROM A PAINTING BY VAN HUYSUM.

us, that the young lady, dishonoured in the eyes of the world by impropriety of conduct, fled from her country and sought refuge in Paris, where she and her works were equally well

our artist, that Van Gool speaks here only from supposition, when we find him in error as to the career of Mademoiselle Havermann. He informs us, that on her arrival in France

she was received by the Academy of Painting, which is not correct. It is scarcely likely that Van Gool should be more correct on one point than another. However this may be, Van Huysum allowed no trace of this bitterness of character to appear in his pictures. It may have been that he allowed something to peep out, but he expressed it symbolically and mysteriously in a language understood only by himself. He may have allowed the complaints of his wounded spirit to find vent sometimes in the bitter perfume of some wild flower, which he mingles with his garden favourites. Antiquity had set an example of these delicate allusions, and the celebrated flower-girl of Athens gave a meaning, and that a clear one, to every garland she wore. But whether Van Huysum sought or not to emulate Glycera must for ever remain a mystery. All we know is, that he threw his whole soul into his works.

We regret that Vanderkamp, usually so copious in his details, has not given us some distinct account of Van Huysum's female pupil. He does not mention the name of Mdlle. Havermann at all, but alludes, with considerable vagueness, to reports of some symptoms of envy exhibited by his favourite artist. He declares them to have been totally unfounded, and a little afterwards tells the story of a Miss Petermann for whom Van Huysum appears to have entertained a great affection. If, indeed, we did not know his character too well, we should imagine that he sought a refuge from the unhappiness produced by his jealousy in the society of this young lady, who was an artist like himself, though not his pupil.

Her favourite subjects, indeed, were the bright-coloured birds brought home by the Indian traders; but as she introduced frequently a few flowers as accessories, it is probable that her friend gave her some advice as to their composition and colouring. From the similarity of the names we should be disposed to think that the whole story of the envy of Van Huysum for Mdlle. Havermann was an invention of his enemies. Miss Petermann, according to Vanderkamp, some years after her intimacy with our painter had diminished, married without the consent of her parents, and left the country in order to avoid their displeasure. She settled in Paris, and was no more heard of.

Haarlem was, in the seventeenth century, the city of flowers *par excellence*. It boasted of some of the finest gardens in the world. George Foster, one of the comrades of Captain Cook, thus speaks of the famous flower-garden of Haarlem:—"I can no longer deny that the winds scatter perfumes from Araby the Blest to the very ocean; for through the balmy atmosphere we could distinguish the balsamic odour of the hyacinth and other flowers." We all know the fabulous prices paid by certain Dutch amateurs for flowers, and particularly for certain varieties of the tulip. At the time when Van Huysum lived, certain squares of tulips were priced at six and eight hundred pounds. A passionate admirer of this plant, one day, in default of money, gave cattle and goods to the value of 2,500 florins (about £250). The proud owners of these rarities were the men who delighted to open to Van Huysum their marvellous conservatories, their incomparable gardens. Woerhelm is quoted as owing a portion of his great celebrity as a gardener to his extreme hospitality, and the friendship which existed between him and the painter. Our artist, then, had only to select the most lovely amid all that was lovely; and every one will at once appreciate the immense advantage he enjoyed in having before his eyes on all occasions the most perfect and choice examples.

By dint of constant contemplation, Van Huysum appears to have discovered in flowers every aspect of insect life; but as he has taken care to make details always subordinate to the triumph of his bouquet, it is only by careful examination that we discover those little insects which surround the rose with a shining, singing, buzzing escort. The queen of flowers, however, is not the only one that rejoices in a court; the narcissus, the forget-me-not, the honeysuckle, receive within their calyx the honey-bee; the Spanish jasmin has its parasites, and the more insignificant bell-flower has its winged ants and other satellites. The insects of our friend Van Huysum are almost as numerous as the flies which visit the strawberry-bed of

Bernadin de St. Pierre. "They were," says the latter, "distinguished one from the other by their colour, their shape, and their movements. There were some of golden, some of silver, some of bronze tint, some were spotted, some streaked, some blue, some green, some dark, some clear. Some had heads round like a turban, others long like the point of a nail; to some they looked like a point of black velvet, others they dazzled, as if they had been rubies." Such is this little world, and Van Huysum has given it life with as delicate a pencil as the pen of the poet. But he is not satisfied to raise a fly with its gauze wings on the clear ground of an apricot or other fruit; he further observes and studies, to enrich his work, the snail which crawls under the leaf of a raspberry-bush, the butterfly which flies around his vase, and the bright beetles, with their gold and copper hues. If we examine these beautiful bouquets, engraved by Eardom in mezzotint, we see admirably represented an insect which crawls timidly on a gooseberry branch, which serves as a junction between two peaches, like a bridge between two mountains upon a precipice. We often see the bullfinch making its nest at the feet of the bouquets of Van Huysum, and beside his little gray-spotted eggs are to be seen numerous rose-buds. Birds and flowers are about to burst forth together. Even to the very dew-drop is the painter accurate and admirable. He paints this little accessory with life in all its fresh transparency, and there stand trembling on a bunch of grapes, fresh, cool, and humid, in the pictures of Van Huysum, those liquid pearls which live but a fitful hour.

This may be a proper place to say a few words of mezzotint, alluded to above. Some writers have indicated, as the inventor of mezzotint engraving, the Prince Palatine Robert Rupert of Bavaria, nephew of Charles I. Others say that this prince was let into the secret by Louis de Siegen, an officer in the service of Hesse-Cassel, whose first work, published in 1643, was a bust of the Landgravine Amelia Elizabeth. The prince communicated the secret of De Siegen to Walleran Vaillant, a Flemish painter, and it was divulged by the indiscretion of some workmen. We shall return to this point.

It is generally known in what mezzotint differs from line engraving and aquatint. Instead of the engraver in aquatint and line using his point to form the dashes and the shades upon a polished plate which represents the lights, the engraver in mezzotint uses a particular instrument to produce the lights upon a granulated plate which represents the shadow. In other words, he spreads black on a white surface; the other distributes white on a black surface. The graining of the plate on which the engraver operates in mezzotint is obtained by means of a tool called a cradle. This tool, of a circular form, is armed with little, all-but-imperceptible teeth; it is moved over the surface of the plate in every way, so that the copper is covered with little asperities, which form the grains of which we speak. If the copper-plate thus prepared is placed in the press, there results a proof of a velvety black and of a perfectly even tint. This uniform black, obtained by a merely mechanical process, is the basis of the artist's work. After having traced his drawing, the engraver makes his lights and half-lights, wearing away the grain more or less with the scraper. These lights, the half-tints, and the black furnished by the upper grain, compose the effect of *chiaro-oscuro*, which is necessary to produce the desired effect. The labour of the engraver in mezzotint consists not exactly in engraving the copper, but in destroying artistically what the workman has engraved with the cradle.

Mezzotint is more fit than any other style to represent phantoms, enchantments, artificial lights, like that of a lamp, a torch, fire—in a word, all kinds of night effects. Lairese also declares that this process is the best by which to render the effect of plants, fruits, flowers, vases of gold, silver, and crystal, armour, etc. But this is somewhat of an erroneous opinion, and is surprising in one who was himself so able in mezzotint. Fruits, flowers, precious vases, and armour—all objects distinguished by the rich variety of their substances, and which present such divers aspects—are much better ex-

pressed in line engraving than in mezzotint. This is so true, that classical science has found a thousand ingenious ways of cutting copper to characterise each of these objects, and to have them recognised at the first glance—metallic and reflective bodies, as well as the satin surface of a flower, or its thorny stalk; the skin of an apricot, as well as the rough coat of a melon, or the tough skin of a pomegranate. While the one can easily represent the soft petals of the tulip, or the ruddy peach, mezzotint has not a grain to render all the other varied tints with energy and native softness.

The fact is, mezzotint, with its deep shades, its union of masses, and its bold demi-tints, suits fantastic subjects, subjects of sombre poetry, so familiar to the genius of Rembrandt; it is suited to moonlights by the melancholy Elzheimer, or night-scenes as understood by Schalhem and Gerard Douw. Certainly, if this style of engraving does not imitate solid bodies effectually, and render the apparent character of their substances, it is admirably adapted to the representation of rich hangings, of satins and velvets, and even of flesh; for the mezzotint engraver has not to fear that shiny effect which often renders the naked form unnatural in other engravings. In the reproduction of colours, this process easily gives almost inexpressible demi-tints, which made the Italians call the style *mezzo-tinto*, a name we have adopted instead of the *maniere noire* of the French. But still it must be confessed, that if mezzotint colours a scene more broadly and more naturally, it is not so easy to render in it the finer elements of the art. It offers less scope to the genius and power of the artist.

Another defect of this style is, that it does not last, that the plate soon wears out when in the press. William Gilpin says himself that you cannot obtain more than one hundred good proofs in mezzotint, the rubbing of the hand, and the press, having soon worn out work that has scarcely penetrated beyond the surface of the copper. "Nevertheless," says this writer, "if you constantly repair the plate, it may give four or five hundred proofs of a very tolerable character. The best impressions are not always the first; these are too black and too crude; the good ones begin from the fortieth to the sixtieth."

By a singular contradiction in the usual order of things, it happens that mezzotint produced its best results in the early days of the discovery, so that the first engraver in mezzotint was the ablest and the most justly celebrated. On this point many writers have disagreed with the canon of Salisbury, who asserts that this art has gone on progressing with the age, and who says that the masters of the eighteenth century are very far superior to the contemporaries of Prince Rupert. Even the very existence of pictures executed by Rupert is denied by Gilpin, who says distinctly, "As for the works of Prince Rupert, I know those that are positively proved to be by him; and those which are given out as his are executed in a hard, black, coarse, disagreeable style, which the masters who succeeded him imitated." This is an error to be regretted in a man of such eminence as Gilpin. A very eminent and graceful critic says, "In the first place, it is certain that the prince did engrave; and what more convincing proof can I give of this fact, than that his arms are attached, by way of signature, to the works he has executed, especially to that admirable picture of the Executioner who holds up the head of St. John, an engraving after Rebeira." These arms are found on the plate when it has been reduced, and nothing but the bust of the executioner remains. To such a decisive proof need we add the testimony of Bason?

But without entering into a long analytical inquiry into the questions raised by Gilpin, we can by no means agree that the engravings are executed in the harsh, black, and disagreeable style which is ascribed to them by Gilpin. On the contrary, the full length piece representing the "Executioner" appears to us to be a masterpiece in mezzotint; especially, if we examine it in fine proofs, such as are sometimes found in England, generally very superior to those found in the National Library of Paris, in the valuable and inexhaustible print department. In fact, it is from this very production that we can judge what the full force of mezzotint is, when in the

hand of a master who knows how to remove its crudity, and to correct its natural difficulties by the boldness of his lights and shades, the suddenness of his transitions, and the proper use of his scraper. Thus treated, the engraving in mezzotint is a true picture, because to the tranquillity produced by broad and well-defined shadows it unites free and lively touches, masculine relief, and dashing touches which belong only to painters. These admirable attempts are difficult to reach in ordinary engraving, because the hand only touches the black, and is compelled to be chary of lights, instead of applying them with resolution and vigour, as you can in mezzotint, by energetic strokes and the careful use of the scraper. In other words, in ordinary engraving the whites are negative, and all the energy is in the shadows. In mezzotint, energy can as well be found in the touch of the deeper scratched lights as in the shadows, where softness is increased by aquatint.

"The character of Prince Rupert," says a somewhat partial historian, "is pictured fully in this fine engraving of the 'Executioner holding the head of St. John,' as boldly dashed off, as proud as the picture of the Espagnolet." In the midst of a refined court, as Horace Walpole says, Rupert looked like a rude artisan; but let us rather copy the portrait traced by the Tory Hamilton, and which Walpole himself cannot help quoting. "He was brave and valiant to a fault. His mind was subject to certain errors he would have been sorry to correct. His mind had been fertilised by experiments in mathematics, and by some study in chemistry. He was polite to excess when it was not required, while he was proud and even insolent when he should have been civil. He was tall and had a truculent look. His face was dry and hard when even he tried to soften its expression; when he was ill-humoured he looked like a demon."

Such was the man who rested from the fatigues of Naseby and Marston Moor, and from acts more than questionable; who fled from the fatigue of courts by giving himself up to an art of which he only knew the rudiments, and yet which he carried to perfection. If he really was the inventor of the mezzotint, as Horace Walpole affirms, it is curious to know how, according to this author, Rupert was brought to this discovery.

"Let us take the prince in his workshop," says Walpole, "covered with dirt, ill combed, and perhaps with a dirty shirt. On the day of which I speak, he certainly was not shaved and powdered to pay his court to Miss Hughes; for I speak of the time when he was living in retirement at Brussels, after his uncle's final catastrophe. Going out that day early in the morning, he remarked a sentry, who, at a certain distance from his post, was doing something to his gun.

"'What are you doing?' said the prince.

"The soldier replied, that the dew which had fallen during the night had rusted his gun, and that he was scraping and cleaning it.

"The prince approached, and, examining it nearer, thought he saw something like a figure on the barrel, with innumerable little holes close to each other, like damask work in silver or gold, and of which the soldier had engraven a part. Every one knows what an ordinary officer would have done in a similar case. If he had been a simple sprig of fashion, he would have scolded the young fellow and given him a shilling; but the 'genius fertile in experience' drew from this simple accident the idea of mezzotint. From what he had seen, the prince concluded that the means were to be found of covering a plate of copper with a grain composed of fine asperities, which would give, on being printed, a black proof; and that on scratching different parts, more or less, demi-tints and lights would be produced. He communicated this idea immediately to the painter Walleran Vaillant, and they set to work together. After numerous experiments, they invented a steel roller with teeth like a rasp, which produced a grain on the copper, that is to say, the black background they were in search of; and on this background, scratched or rubbed at will, they easily found every gradation of light."

Such is Walpole's version. According to this it appears that Rupert invented mezzotint at the time he was living in

retirement at Brussels; that is to say, after the death of Charles I., and consequently after the year 1649. But we have seen before, that already an officer in the service of Hesse Cassel had published a mezzotint representing the portrait of the Landgravine Amelia Elizabeth, which picture bears the date of 1643. It is impossible, then, to admit that Rupert was the inventor of a process which a Bavarian officer found before him, unless we suppose, which is unlikely, that the prince knew nothing of the discovery of Louis of Siegen.

a small mezzotint engraving, representing a satyr, and then after taking a proof he finished it in another hour.

In France, mezzotint has never been a favourite style, either with painters or with the public. In England, however, it has been very popular, and many could be named who have given lustre and vogue to the style.

Van Huysum painted many flowers in water-colours, and they are his best, and those which at the present day fetch the largest sums, not only because of their rarity,



FLOWERS AND FRUIT,—FROM A PAINTING BY VAN HUYSUM.

Horace Walpole, who in this instance simply put in order the manuscript of *Virtue*, assures us that he had the story from Killigrew, who had it from the painter Evelyn. It is, however, well known that other writers have attributed the discovery to Sir Christopher Wren, who communicated it to Prince Rupert. However this may be, this style of engraving has many advantages. Independently of the poetry which it lends to many subjects, mezzotint offers a more expeditious method, and on this point the painter Gerard de Lairese tells us that he prepared in an hour, while walking in his garden,

but also because they so admirably represent the freshness and beauty of nature. As to his paintings in oil, they have all the qualities of a solid water-colour, and the faults of a painting on porcelain, fine and tempered, but slightly defective. They seem as if they were painted with water-colours on panels prepared with glue, and finished up in oil. The colours, still brilliant and unchangeable, show the extreme care he took to purify and to select them.

The landscapes of Van Huysum are highly esteemed by the Dutch, and they have been known to pay as dear for them as

even for his flowers. And yet these landscapes, to speak frankly, are but copies of Guaspre, imitations of Glauber, reminiscences of Poussin and Claude. Van Huysum lived at a time when the Dutch school was reverting to the foreign style. The *naïve* lovers of nature, the Karels, the Van der Velde, the Paul Potters, even Ruysdael—those great painters to whom the sight of a shady hut, the humblest rill, and a few houses, sufficed to inspire a masterpiece—gave way to landscape-painters influenced by historical pre-occupations. The great Gerard de Lairese, a learned master, “too literary to be a painter of the first order,” had introduced into the

had to be rendered, produced, in these instances, insipid and cold pictures, which, despite all his talent, had neither the picturesque style of Berghem, nor the sylvan charm of Ruysdael, nor the grandeur of Guaspre and Goussels. The only reason why the Dutch are so proud of a landscape of Van Huysum is, that their very rarity makes them precious, and rarity is often more coveted than genius.

We must then, after all, come back to the bouquets of Van Huysum; and it really should suffice for an artist to be the greatest of flower-painters in his school, as great, indeed, as any. Even in fruits we must not wholly absolve him from



THE FISHERMAN.—FROM A PAINTING BY VAN HUYSUM.

simple pasturages of Holland the nymphs and demigods of Poussin. Ancient dryads came to visit the groves where before had only wandered the buxom and short-petticoated farmers' wives of Berghem. But this bastard classicity could never inspire the same enthusiasm, and win the same success, as the productions which emanated from the simple impressions of the masters. The natural consequence of his composing his landscapes merely from the study of old engravings (and he certainly knew nothing of the countries he attempted to paint) became evident. Van Huysum, who was so admirable, so warm, so exquisite, when a leaf or a flower

having been unsuccessful. Some of them resemble wax, and assume the polish of ivory. We must confess, in fact, that in this department of his art Van Huysum is below David de Heem. His peaches are too firm, his prunes have “not a thirsty look,” and his grapes are wanting in maturity, in golden hue, and in sunny warmth. He succeeds better in bunches of red currants, and the inside of pomegranates, divided by membranous skins into little red lodges full of pips; sparkling rubies, which rejoice the sight, and seem as it were to slake the thirst.

Whether his subject was fruits or flowers (and he was

very fond of mixing them up), Van Huysum liked to paint his pictures on light grounds; and these are the favourites with amateurs. "There is no colour," says Lairese, "which does not look well upon white, though really the most sombre then look best." By keeping his background slightly gray, Van Huysum could easily display clear flowers there with vigorous tone; and he had, moreover, this advantage, that this neutral ground, being less luminous, gave a reflection to the dark models which were projected upon it.

Van Huysum had three brothers, who were distinguished in painting: Justus, who died at twenty-two, and who painted large and small battle-pieces with astonishing facility, and without models, with great genius and taste. Jacob, who died in London, used to copy the works of his brother so as to deceive even a practised eye. He also designed pictures himself, after nature, which are much esteemed. The third, named John, lived still in 1773, in the year that Deschamps published the fourth volume of the "Lives of Painters." Van Huysum died on the 8th of February, 1749, leaving three children; and though he received, during his lifetime, considerable sums of money for his pictures, he died poor.

"The high price of Van Huysum's pictures," says a French critic, "is accounted for in several ways. In the first place, their finish is exquisite, and it is a circumstance worth remarking, that amateurs pay according to the labour which a picture seems to have cost; then to their beauty, for it is certain that, in the special instance of flowers, Van Huysum never had a rival; in fine, to their rarity, for in all Europe we can scarcely find a hundred pictures altogether." The painter himself sold them at a high rate, and his principal purchasers, therefore, were such men as the Count de Merville, the Duke of Orleans, the Elector of Saxony, the Prince of Hesse Cassel, the King of Poland, the King of Prussia, the Elector Palatine, and the Stadtholder.

The Museum of the Louvre possesses some of the finest Van Huysums known to the world. They consist of landscapes, flowers, fruits, etc.; some rated as high as £480. Smith says:—"He attained to as high a degree of perfection in painting fruit and flowers as is likely that science will attain. His best works defy imitation; but there are skilful copies in existence, which closely resemble his works. His imitators were his brother Jacob Van Huysum, who devoted his time to study and copying his brother's pictures, in which he became very skilful. He died in London, 1746. He lived for some time with Lord Orford, and painted a number of pictures for him. Another was Herman Van der Myn, born at Amsterdam, 1684. He studied under Ernest Steven, and being attracted by the beauty of Van Huysum, began to copy him, succeeded well—and none have arrived at considerable eminence in this branch of art, but became anxious to distinguish himself in others—painted distance and portrait subjects, but was not prudent, and died in London, in poverty, 1741."

John Van Os, father and son, studied Van Huysum; the younger produced some brilliant pictures; two of them are in the Royal Museum at the Hague. His other imitators were Wybrand Hendricks, Herman Van Brussel, and John Linthorst.

The Marquis of Westminster has a fine picture, worth £260. It is a rich assemblage of fruit, consisting of purple and white grapes, a cut melon, peaches, plums, apricots, an open pomegranate, a bunch of filberts, a cracked walnut, currants, and raspberries, some of which are disposed in a basket, and the whole skilfully grouped on a marble table, mingled with a few flowers, consisting of the cock's-comb, the hollyhock, and the convolvulus. This picture gives evidence of a master-hand in every detail; the effect of the whole is most exquisite.

In the Amsterdam Museum is a picture representing an elegant group of flowers, composed of roses, hyacinths, auriculas, anemones, disposed in a vase adorned with boys playing with a goat, placed on a marble slab, on which are a bird's nest with four eggs, and a pæony, some blue-bells, and a rose. Dated 1726, painted on a light ground.

There is another representing a fine collection of fruit, consisting of grapes, peaches, plums, apples, etc., and a vine branch and a sprig with raspberries on it, interspersed with a few flowers and insects.

In the Louvre is a very fine work—"A quantity of Fruit," piled indiscriminately on a marble table, consisting of grapes, peaches, and plums, amongst which are mingled an African marigold, hyacinths, and a cock's-comb. A basket of apricots is also on the table. It is on a light ground.

Another represents "A quantity of fine Fruit," consisting of melons, peaches, grapes, and plums, interspersed with flowers—white poppies, cock's-combs, and convolvuluses, grouped on a marble slab. In the background is a terra-cotta vase, adorned with Cupids.

In the Royal Gallery of Dresden is "A group of Flowers," consisting of red and white roses, irises, tulips, etc., tastefully arranged in a vase, standing on a marble slab, on which lies a chaffinch's nest with three eggs.

In the Royal Hermitage of St. Petersburg is the representation of "A beautiful Vase, embossed with Cupids," standing on a marble table, containing a rich assemblage of flowers, consisting of white, red, and yellow roses, auriculas, anemones, poppies, African marigolds, etc., upon the table. At the foot of the vase are a chaffinch's nest containing four eggs, a sprig of nasturtiums, and a full-blown rose. The background represents a park scene. Signed and dated 1722.

The companion to this is "A choice selection of Fruit," disposed in the most skilful manner on a marble table, amongst which may be enumerated clusters of grapes of different kinds, peaches, pomegranates, apricots, and plums; with these are tastefully mingled the white poppy, the scarlet lychnis, and the marigold. A bunch of red currants, a cracked walnut, and another in its shell, lie on the front of the table; and at the extremity of the group stands a handsome vase, adorned with nymphs, in which are a hollyhock, a rose, and other flowers.

THE PICTURES IN THE LOUVRE AT PARIS.

No artist or connoisseur should omit seeing the pictures in the Louvre—the most exquisite and complete collection of ancient and modern art ever brought together. How the collection has been made, and by what means the splendid altar-pieces, and other historical *chefs-d'œuvre* of the great masters, have found their way from the cathedrals of Spain and the palaces of Italy, to the halls of one of the most ancient castles in France, the admiring visitor will scarcely pause to inquire, as he passes, catalogue in hand, through the various salons, and gazes, in mute wonder, on the famous Murillos, Vandycks, Raffaelles, Titians, Claudes, Rubens, Cuyps, Teniers, &c., with which these walls are decorated. Nor will it be necessary, in this place, to say more than that the principal pictures, illustrative of the various schools of classic art, were obtained for the Louvre by Napoleon, and that Louis Philippe, the greatest art-patron of modern times, spared no trouble or expense in adding to the collection such works as were necessary to its completion in a chronological point of view.

Thus there are now in the Louvre upwards of fourteen hundred pictures illustrative of the four great schools or styles of art—the Italian; the Dutch, with the Flemish, and German; the Spanish; and the French. Of this number, four hundred and eighty belong to the Italian, five hundred and forty to the Dutch and German, and three hundred and eighty to the French school. Besides these, there are eight modern copies of ancient pictures, and a very large collection of the works of recent French painters. The illustrations of the Spanish school consist of sixteen pictures by Francisco Collantes, L. de Morales, Ribiera, Velasquez, and Murillo.

The pictures of the old masters are nearly all contained in two large apartments, called the *Salon Carré* and the Long Gallery; those of the modern artists are distributed in the various saloons and galleries devoted to the exhibition of Egyptian and Roman antiquities, Nineveh remains, bronzes,